



AHMANSON THEATRE
MARK TAPER FORUM
KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE

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For immediate release.

CENTER THEATRE GROUP ANNOUNCES THE 2016-2017 SEASON AT THE KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE

**CTG Marks 13 Seasons at the Douglas and 50 Years in Los Angeles
Five World Premieres and an American Premiere Set for the Douglas
Plus the Launch of the Block Party Celebration Featuring Three Plays
Selected From Among the Best Recent L.A. Productions**

The New Season Begins September 10, 2016, and Runs Through August 6, 2017.
For a complete listing of plays and performance dates, please see final page of release.

Center Theatre Group Artistic Director Michael Ritchie has set the 2016-2017 season at the CTG/Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City.

“This is an exciting season of firsts,” said Ritchie. “We have filled our 13th season at the Douglas with premieres – five world premieres and one American premiere.

“And, as we celebrate Center Theatre Group’s 50 years of creating theatre in Los Angeles, we also want to turn the spotlight on some of the remarkable work being done on the other stages throughout L.A. with our inaugural **Block Party** featuring three plays chosen from the many amazing works done by our fellow theatre companies over the last year and a half.

“Looking back into our recent past, in 2015, DouglasPlus audiences got a glimpse into the fantastic world of Lucy Alibar’s Southern childhood when we presented **‘Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up’** as a work in progress. Now she is ready to premiere her truly unique coming of age story and we are thrilled to have it on our stage.”

“We also welcome back award-winning playwright Jon Robin Baitz for his seventh production at CTG and third world premiere with the politically charged **‘Vicuña,’**” said Ritchie, “as well as Tim Crouch whose **‘Adler & Gibb’** looks at the artists behind the art and promises to be as inciting as his immersive play **‘The Author’** that rocked DouglasPlus audiences in 2011.

“Celebrated playwright Lauren Yee will join us for the first time with her funny, touching and very personal play, **‘King of the Yees,’** which places her family center stage. Writer/co-director Deborah Stein and co-director/performer Suli Holum will also join us for the first time with a stunningly inventive work, **‘The Wholehearted,’** featuring performance and video with rockabilly and country music to tell the story of a female boxing champion and her battles outside of the ring.”

“We will celebrate a new voice in the theatre with the first play by actress and now playwright Ngozi Anyanwu,” said Ritchie. “Her **‘Good Grief’** explores the difficult journey to adulthood. I am proud to bring her new work to life at the Douglas and look forward to more work from this talented writer.

“It is a season that continues the growing tradition of bold, theatrically adventurous plays that have come to define the Kirk Douglas Theatre. I have always strived to present the widest possible range of theatrical experiences. This season features plays from internationally renowned theatre artists and emerging local voices. Stories will reveal themselves in the privacy of a childhood bedroom and under the bright spotlight of a national election. We are collaborating with theatres across the country, the globe and just across town to bring theatre that will engross, challenge and entertain our audiences.”

The 2016-2017 season at the Douglas is part of Center Theatre Group's 50th anniversary that includes the previously announced 2016-2017 season at the Ahmanson Theatre and the 2017 season at the Mark Taper Forum, which will be announced this summer. Both the Taper and the Ahmanson are part of The Music Center of Los Angeles County and are the theatres where Center Theatre Group began in 1967. Center Theatre Group added the Kirk Douglas Theatre in 2004.

“Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up”

By Lucy Alibar

Oscar-nominated screenwriter Lucy Alibar (“Beasts of the Southern Wild”) brings her unforgettable Southern childhood to fantastical life in **“Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up,”** launching the 2016-2017 season. Directed by Center Theatre Group Associate Artistic Director Neel Keller, the world premiere of this touching and hilarious one-woman show runs September 10 through October 2, 2016, with opening set for September 16.

Written and performed by Alibar, “Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up” blends a lecherous goat, Pentecostals on the radio, a clutter of inbred cats, phone calls from death row, Daddy’s burnpile and countless other rich ingredients into a delicious and magical stew of stories about a singular childhood in Grady County, Florida.

“Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up” was developed by Center Theatre Group and was presented as a work in progress at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in 2015 as part of Center Theatre Group’s DouglasPlus program.

Lucy Alibar’s plays have been produced or developed at the National Theatre Studio in London, Joe’s Pub, the Ojai Playwrights Conference, Berkeley Rep Ground Floor, Williamstown Theatre Festival, HERE Arts Center, Ensemble Studio Theatre, the Avignon Festival, Women Center Stage at Classic Stage Company and the Cherry Lane Theatre. Her first movie, “Beasts of the Southern Wild” (an adaptation with Benh Zeitlin of her stage play “Juicy and Delicious”), received the Sundance Grand Jury Prize, the Cannes Film Festival Caméra d’Or and earned Alibar nominations for BAFTA, Oscar and a Scriptor Awards. She is a Sundance Screenwriting Fellow, a two-time finalist for the Heideman Award at Actors Theatre of Louisville and finalist for the O’Neill Playwrights Conference.

Lucy is an alumni of the Obie Award-winning Youngblood and cofounder of the New Georges Writer/Director Lab.

“Vicuña”
By Jon Robin Baitz

As the 2016 election cycle reaches its fevered peak, Tony nominee and Pulitzer-finalist Jon Robin Baitz dives into the debate with the world premiere of **“Vicuña,”** October 23 through November 20, 2016. The opening is set for October 30.

Directed by Robert Egan, “Vicuña” delves beneath the oversteering, through the weave and into the true power of the power suit. A suit may or may not make the man but it definitely reveals him – offering the world a glimpse of his taste, judgement and intelligence. Influenced by the evolving political landscape, Baitz’s new play focuses on a brash candidate on the rise and the world-renowned tailor who just might have the final piece needed to clinch the election.

“Vicuña” will be the seventh play by Jon Robin Baitz to be presented by Center Theatre Group and the third to receive its world premiere with CTG. Past productions at the Taper include “Dutch Landscape” (world premiere), “The Substance of Fire,” “Three Hotels,” “Ten Unknowns” and “Other Desert Cities.” “The Paris Letter” received its world premiere at Kirk Douglas Theatre. Baitz’s other plays include “The Film Society,” “The End of the Day,” “A Fair Country,” “Mizlansky/Zilinsky,” and a new version of Ibsen’s “Hedda Gabler” (for Broadway starring Kate Burton). He is a Pulitzer Prize finalist for “A Fair Country” and “Other Desert Cities” and a Guggenheim, NEA and American Academy of Arts & Letters Award winner. His screenplays include “The Substance of Fire” and “People I Know” starring Al Pacino. Baitz created the drama series “Brothers & Sisters” in 2006, after writing an episode of “The West Wing” (“The Long Goodbye”).

DouglasPlus
“The Wholehearted”
Conceived and Created by Stein | Holum Projects
Written by Deborah Stein

Stein | Holum Projects’ engrossing one-woman show **“The Wholehearted”** is presented as part of DouglasPlus, December 2 – 11, 2016, with opening set for December 3. Written and co-directed by Deborah Stein and performed and co-directed by Suli Holum with original songs by Obie Award-winning composer and sound designer James Sugg, the world premiere production is produced in association with La Jolla Playhouse.

Set in a boxing gym where female boxing phenom Dee Crosby is preparing for a whole new fight, “The Wholehearted” looks past the neatly-packaged Cinderella stories of sports coverage into the real world of a woman grappling with lost love and an abusive husband. “The Wholehearted” blends music, video and physicality into a singular theatrical experience that Don Aucoin of the Boston Globe called, “a boldly arresting work, elevated

by its pervasive and skillful use of video and by Holum's alternately brooding and explosive portrayal of Dee."

Stein | Holum Projects (SHP) is the creative partnership of playwright/director Deborah Stein and performer/director Suli Holum. Drawing on over a decade of experience in both experimental and regional theatre, SHP works with a core group of accomplished designers to create a unique hybrid of the highly visual and dexterously verbal; interdisciplinary physical theatre with complex and nuanced characters. Their first play, "Chimera," premiered at HERE as part of Under the Radar and was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Solo Performance.

Suli Holum is a founder and former Co-Artistic Director of Pig Iron Theatre Company where she established herself as a collaborative playmaker. With diverse training that includes Lecoq, Viewpoints, puppetry and various dance forms, Holum creates work that is highly physical and transformative. Her off-Broadway acting credits include "Hot 'n' Throbbing," "Courting Vampires," "Live Girls," "Lebensraum" (Drama Desk Award) and regionally she appeared in "Born Yesterday" (Helen Hayes nomination) at Arena Stage. She is a recipient of a 2010 TCG Fox Resident Actor Fellowship.

Deborah Stein's other plays include "Heist!" (Actors Theatre of Louisville Humana Festival commission), "God Save Gertrude" (Workhaus Collective, Theatre @ Boston Court), "Wallflower" (Stages Repertory Theatre) and "Bone Portraits" (Stillpoint Productions). Deborah has created collaborative original work with artists such as Joseph Chaikin, Dominique Serrand and Lear deBessonet. Since 2000 she has collaborated on six original works with Pig Iron Theatre Company, for which she received three Barrymore Award nominations.

DouglasPlus
"Adler & Gibb"
By Tim Crouch

Co-commissioned by Center Theatre Group with the Royal Court Theatre in London, the American premiere of "**Adler & Gibb**" will be presented as part of DouglasPlus, January 17 – 29, 2017, and opens January 18, at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. "Adler & Gibb" is written by Tim Crouch and directed by Crouch, Andy Smith and Karl James.

"Adler & Gibb" tells the fictional story of Janet Adler and Margaret Gibb, legendary boundary-pushing conceptual artists working in New York late last century. When they abruptly step away from the limelight at the height of their careers, the mysterious move only adds fuel to their fame.

When "Adler & Gibb" opened at the Royal Court Theatre in London, Paul Taylor of The Independent said, "... an evening that starts off with the air of a studied prank becomes emotionally piercing ..." calling the production "memorable and rewarding. ..." And Andrzej Lukowski of Time Out London raved, "At its best, this hilarious, harrowing and maddening interrogation of the value of art explodes with fearless intent and piercing intelligence ... Tim Crouch has earned his place in the contemporary theatre pantheon."

Tim Crouch returns to the Kirk Douglas Theatre where his searing and immersive play "The Author" was presented as part of DouglasPlus in 2011. His other plays include

the Obie Award-winning “An Oak Tree” (Odyssey Theatre), “My Arm,” “ENGLAND” (a play for galleries), “what happens to the hope at the end of the evening” and “I, Malvolio.” Tim works with a number of associates and collaborators to produce his writing. Organizations that have been involved more deeply in the work – through commission or co-production – include the Royal Court Theatre, the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh, the British Council, Brighton Festival, Singapore Arts Festival, Culturgest in Lisbon, Warwick Arts Centre, the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Theatre.

Good Grief

By Ngozi Anyanwu

Winner of the 2016 Humanitas/Center Theatre Group Playwriting Prize, Ngozi Anyanwu’s “**Good Grief**” has its world premiere at the Douglas from February 26 to March 26, 2017, and opens March 5. Directed by Patricia McGregor, this is the first of Anyanwu’s plays to receive a full professional production.

“Good Grief” follows Nkechi (played by Anyanwu), a good Nigerian-American girl frozen in her own coming of age story. When tragedy strikes on an unplanned break from college, she retreats into her childhood home and reexamines the many steps she’s taken on the way to adulthood, from first crush, to missed connections to the struggles of a first-generation girl blending in to her suburban Pennsylvania reality.

Additional casting will be announced at a later date.

A recent graduate of the University of California San Diego's MFA acting program, Ngozi Anyanwu is an actress, writer, producer and director. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Theatre from Point Park University and performed at the Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Barrington Stage, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater and the Mark Taper Forum. Anyanwu is the founder and one of the original members of the 1st Generation Nigerian Project where she served as Artistic Director and wrote and performed along with several other amazing Nigerian-American female artists under the direction of John Gould Rubin (Bank Street Theatre, Women Center Stage Festival). She now serves as Co-Artistic Director of Now Africa's Playwrights Festival. She has directed “She Gon Learn,” by Lisa Strum for the Emerging Arts Festival and for the United Solo Festival. She has also served as assistant director at Intar (Unit 52) and under Eve Best with Old Vic New Voices.

Block Party: Celebrating Los Angeles Theatre

Drawing upon the rich local theatre community, **Block Party: Celebrating Los Angeles Theatre** at the Kirk Douglas Theatre will be presented over six weeks, April 14 – May 21, 2017.

Los Angeles is home to over 250 theatre companies, featuring an abundance of talent, diversity and ingenuity. Center Theatre Group is tapping into this deep pool of artists to create the inaugural Block Party – a selection of three recent productions from local theatre companies, highlighting some of the best work the city has to offer.

Center Theatre Group has a long history of pairing with local theatre companies including the Deaf West production of “Big River” which was produced at the Mark Taper Forum in 2003 and went on to Broadway before returning to the Ahmanson Theatre in 2005 as part of a national tour. More recently, Center Theatre Group partnered with Ebony Repertory Theatre for the remounting of “A Raisin in the Sun” (which played at the Douglas in conversation with the play’s sequel/prequel “Clybourne Park” and was presented simultaneously at the Taper), 24th Street Theatre’s “Walking the Tightrope” (also at the Douglas) and other productions around the city such as “The Behavior of Broadus” (with Burglars of Hamm and Sacred Fools Theater Company) and “Birder” (with the Road Theatre Company).

Theatre companies from the greater Los Angeles area are invited to submit shows that have been produced in the past year and a half for Block Party. Applications are being accepted through August 12, 2016, and the chosen productions will be announced in the fall.

“King of the Yees” by Lauren Yee

The 2016-2017 season at the Kirk Douglas Theatre concludes with the world premiere production of Lauren Yee’s biting funny and heartbreakingly honest new play, **“King of the Yees.”** Directed by Joshua Kahan Brody and produced in association with Goodman Theatre, Yee’s hilarious romp through her own history runs July 9 through August 6, 2017. The opening is set for July 16.

For nearly 20 years, playwright Lauren Yee’s father Larry has been a driving force in the Yee Family Association, a seemingly obsolescent Chinese American men’s club formed 150 years ago in the wake of the Gold Rush. But when her father goes missing, Lauren must plunge into the rabbit hole of San Francisco’s Chinatown and confront a world both foreign and familiar. “King of the Yees” is a joyride across cultural, national and familial borders that explores what it means to truly be a Yee.

In his review of Lauren Yee’s earlier play “Crevice,” Robert Hurwitt of the San Francisco Chronicle wrote, “Yee has an acute ear for contemporary speech and applies a devilishly keen satiric eye to the manners and mores of her generation (and its parents).”

Lauren Yee’s plays include “Ching Chong Chinaman,” (Pan Asian Rep, Mu Performing Arts, Impact Theatre), “The Hatmaker’s Wife” (Playwrights Realm, The Hub, Moxie Theatre, AlterTheater, PlayPenn), “Hookman” (Encore Theatre, Company One), “in a word” (SF Playhouse, Cleveland Public Theatre, Strawdog), “King of the Yees” (Goodman Theatre - New Stages), “Samsara” (Victory Gardens, Chance Theatre, O’Neill Conference) and “The Tiger Among Us” (MAP Fund, Mu). A former Dramatists Guild fellow, MacDowell fellow, Public Theater Emerging Writers Group member, Women’s Project Lab playwright, Second Stage Shank playwright-in-residence, Playwrights’ Center Core Writer and Playwrights Realm Page One playwright, Yee was nominated for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, L. Arnold Weissberger Award, and Outer Critics Circle’s John Gassner Award. She is a Ma-Yi Writers’ Lab member and holds commissions from Denver Center, Lincoln Center/LCT3, Mixed Blood, Portland Center Stage, South Coast Rep, and Trinity

Rep. She currently lives in New York. She holds a B.A. from Yale and MFA from UCSD.

2016-2017 Season is Currently Available by Season Ticket Memberships Only

The 2016-2017 season at the Douglas is currently available by season ticket memberships only. For information and to purchase season tickets by phone, call the Exclusive Season Ticket Membership Hotline at (213) 972-4444. For more information about season tickets visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/Douglas.

The Douglas Experience

A popular feature of the Kirk Douglas Theatre is The Lounge, where patrons can enjoy a cocktail before the show in the comfortable lobby of the theatre, and chat with the well-informed and engaging staff. Alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks can be taken into the seating area. (Many of the productions feature themed cocktails – Tiny Timtini for The Second City's "A Christmas Carol: Twist Your Dickens!")

Patrons are encouraged to come early and explore the interactive displays and activities in The Lounge that are specially crafted for each production. Past productions have included experiences as diverse as a photo booth where patrons could have their photo taken laughing alone with the salad of their choice (for "Women Laughing Alone with Salad"), a timeline showing the history of Chavez Ravine with an area left blank for patrons to add their own memories of Los Angeles (for "Chavez Ravine"), and an electric guitar in the historic ticket booth of the theatre for patrons to rock out with (for "The Black Suits").

In addition, the productions have Stage Talks – post-show conversations in The Lounge facilitated by CTG's knowledgeable and specially trained staff.

The Kirk Douglas Theatre is located at 9820 Washington Blvd. in Culver City. Parking is free in the nearby Culver City's City Hall garage, and a number of the restaurants within steps of the theatre offer exclusive discounts to Kirk Douglas Theatre ticket holders.

Center Theatre Group, a non-profit organization, is one of the largest and most active theatre companies in the nation, programming subscription seasons year-round at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and the 1,600 to 2,000-seat Ahmanson Theatre at the Music Center of Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to providing theatre of the highest caliber to the rich, diverse communities of Southern California and beyond, CTG supports a significant number of play development and arts education initiatives.

Center Theatre Group's 2016-2017 Season at the Kirk Douglas Theatre

First Season Production:

September 10 – October 2, 2016
(Opens September 16.)

“Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up”

Written and Performed by Lucy Alibar
Directed by Neel Keller.
World Premiere.

Second Season Production:

October 23 – November 20, 2016
(Opens October 30.)

“Vicuña”

by Jon Robin Baitz
Directed by Robert Egan.
World Premiere.

DouglasPlus:

December 2 – 11, 2016
(Opens December 3.)

“The Wholehearted”

Conceived and Created
by Stein | Holum Projects
Written and Co-Directed by Deborah Stein
Performed and Co-Directed by Suli Holum
Produced in association with
La Jolla Playhouse.
World Premiere Production.

DouglasPlus:

January 17 – 29, 2017
(Opens January 18.)

“Adler & Gibb”

by Tim Crouch
Directed by Tim Crouch, Andy Smith
and Karl James
A Center Theatre Group co-commission
with the Royal Court Theatre.
American Premiere.

Third Season Production:

February 26 – March 26, 2017
(Opens March 5.)

“Good Grief”

by Ngozi Anyanwu
Directed by Patricia McGregor.
World Premiere.

Fourth Season Production:

April 14 – May 21, 2017

Block Party:

Celebrating Los Angeles Theatre.

Three productions selected from local theatre
companies, highlighting some of the best work
of L.A.

Fifth Season Production:

July 9 – August 6, 2017
(Opens July 16.)

“King of the Yees”

by Lauren Yee
Directed by Joshua Kahan Brody
Produced in association with
Goodman Theatre.
World Premiere Production.

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June 1, 2016